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SUBJECT: GERMANY TO TAKE BACK SEAT IN ONGOING MACEDONIA  
NAME DISPUTE

REF: 117721

¶1. (SBU) MFA Deputy Director for the Balkans Marc Bogdahn told poloff on November 18 in response to reftel points that while Germany supports UN negotiator Nimetz's efforts to resolve Macedonia's name dispute with Greece, Germany had no plans to actively lobby the parties. Bogdahn was downbeat about prospects that the European Council could set a date to begin Macedonia's EU accession negotiations during its December 10 meeting. Bogdahn believed that Greece would still actively oppose any such decision until the name issue was resolved, making it impossible to move forward within the Council.

¶2. (SBU) Drawing on reftel, Poloff expressed USG support for Macedonia's EU aspirations and praised Macedonian progress as noted in the European Commission report. Bogdahn said Germany shared our views; however, he emphasized that the name dispute was a bilateral issue between Macedonia and Greece in which Germany did not want to become overly involved.  
MURPHY